

CAB 3Y/34

1893

No 51

CONFIDENTIAL.

Matabeleland.

I SEND herewith a correspondence with the British South Africa Company on the subject of the requirement which I have made that the settlement of the future of Matabeleland should be conducted under the complete control of Her Majesty's Government. The correspondence is incomplete, as I do not propose to answer the last letter from the Company until after the question has been considered by the Cabinet on Saturday. I am strongly of opinion that the supreme control of the Government should be maintained, the Company being frankly invited to present their views through Mr. Rhodes upon the whole subject.

R.

Colonial Office, November 2, 1893.

PROOF.

18104.

No. /.

The BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY to COLONIAL OFFICE.

[Answered by No. .]

SIR, The British South Africa Company,
19, St. Swithin's Lane, London, October 24, 1893.
I AM instructed by my directors to forward you a cablegram to the following effect, received this afternoon from Mr. C. J. Rhodes:—

"Board of Directors (should) see Marquess of Ripon, ask meaning of Sir Henry Loch's telegram to C. J. Rhodes, stating Marquess of Ripon has placed all negotiations Matabeleland under complete control Sir Henry Loch. British South Africa Company have asked British Government nothing, and surely they have right, in terms of Charter, if victorious, to settle the question with Lobengula, subject only to approval of Marquess of Ripon."

My directors fully endorse the views taken up by Mr. Rhodes, and in view of the great excitement which the matter appears to be causing in South Africa, as well as the importance that there should be no misunderstanding in the present critical position of affairs, my directors hope that you will take the earliest opportunity of obtaining from Lord Ripon such an expression of opinion as will place the matter on a satisfactory basis.

As the subject will be considered at a special meeting of the directors to-morrow, it is hoped that Lord Ripon's reply will be forwarded with the least possible delay, so as to enable us to make the necessary communication to Mr. Rhodes.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CANNING,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

PROOF.

18104.

No. 2.

COLONIAL OFFICE to the BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

[Answered by No. .]

SIR,

Downing Street, October 26, 1893.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Ripon your letter of the 24th instant,* enclosing the substance of a telegram received on that day from Mr. Cecil Rhodes, and I am to acquaint you that the instructions given by Her Majesty's Government to Sir Henry Loch, to which that telegram no doubt refers, do not contemplate the adoption of any course of action inconsistent with the charter of the British South Africa Company, nor do they refer, as appears to be supposed in some quarters, to the conduct of military operations. They relate only to the settlement to be made with Lo Bengula and the Matabele at the termination of the existing hostilities.

Your directors will recollect that the terms of the 7th article of the Company's charter makes it necessary that the Secretary of State, if he intends to reserve to himself the decision of any difference arising between the Company and a native chief or tribe, shall "require" the matter to be submitted to him, and the notice recently given by Sir Henry Loch to the managing director of the Company was requisite under that article so far as regards matters in which the Company is concerned.

But the settlement will necessarily involve considerations far wider than any affecting the interests of the Company and its rights under the charter, and bearing directly upon the peace and security of South and Central Africa generally, and it is therefore needless to point out that Her Majesty's Government are bound to keep the supreme control of that settlement in their own hands.

It appears to Lord Ripon fairer to the Company that Sir Henry Loch, as representing Her Majesty's Government, should control negotiations from the outset than that the Secretary of State should find himself obliged, at a later stage, to reject any arrangement or material part of an arrangement already provisionally made by the Company, a result which would greatly weaken the influence of the Company among the natives.

But with respect to that part of the settlement in which the Company or its rights are concerned, Sir Henry Loch, who is in direct communication with Mr. Rhodes, will ascertain through him the views and wishes of the Company, and will, Lord Ripon feels sure, give them full weight, subject, of course, to those general and paramount considerations to which allusion has been made above, and it is, I am to add, Lord Ripon's wish that the representations of the Company should receive the most attentive consideration.

He believes that there can be no doubt that Sir Henry Loch thoroughly understands all these views, but, to avoid the possibility of any misapprehension, the substance of this letter will at once be communicated to him by telegraph.

I am, &c.

The Secretary,
British South Africa Company.

(Signed) EDWARD FAIRFIELD.

* No.

PROOF.

18138.

No. 3.

The BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY to COLONIAL OFFICE.

[Answered by No. .]

SIR,

19, St. Swithin's Lane, London, October 27, 1893.

I AM desired by my Directors to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date* on the subject of the communication recently made to Mr. Rhodes by Sir Henry Loch.

This letter was considered at a special board meeting held last evening, and will be further dealt with to-day.

Meanwhile I am directed to ask you whether you will be so good as to supply, for the information of my Directors, the precise terms of the instructions given by Her Majesty's Government to Sir Henry Loch, and upon which presumably Sir Henry Loch based his telegram to Mr. Rhodes, referred to in the cable received by my Board from Mr. Rhodes, as set out in the letter from this Company to the Colonial Office of the 24th instant.†

If you can let me hear before 2 o'clock this afternoon I shall be much obliged.

I am, &c.

Edward Fairfield, Esq., C.M.G.,
Colonial Office,
Downing Street, S.W.

(Signed) HERBERT CANNING,
Secretary.

* No.

† No.

77644-148 25.-11/93.

PROOF.

18138.

No. 4.

COLONIAL OFFICE to the BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

SIR,

Downing Street, October 27, 1893.

I HAVE shown your letter of this morning's date* to the Marquess of Ripon, and he desires me in reply to acquaint you that it is not usual to give the terms of instruction given by Her Majesty's Government to the High Commissioner before they are laid before Parliament, and your request cannot therefore be complied with.

But I am to transmit to you for the information of your Directors a copy of Sir H. Loch's telegraphic report† upon the message which he sent to Mr. Rhodes.

I am, &c.

The Secretary to the
British South Africa Company.

(Signed) EDWARD FAIRFIELD.

Enclosure in No. .

In conveying to C. J. Rhodes your directions that negotiations with Lobengula are to be conducted by the High Commissioner, and under his complete control, I added—*Begins:* "No Agreement will of course be concluded without inviting a full expression of your views." *Ends.* I have no acknowledgment from C. J. Rhodes, probably due to telegraphic interruption, but received telegram from Secretary British South Africa Company, to whom your instructions were also conveyed, omitting words above quoted, intimating that he had telegraphed to his Directors, but, he said, without C. J. Rhodes' authority to protest.

* No.

† No.

77644-149 25.-11/93.

PROOF.

18155.

No. .

COLONIAL OFFICE to BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

SIR,

Downing Street, October 27, 1893.

With reference to the other letter from this Department of this day's date,* I am directed by the Marquess of Ripon to acquaint you, for the information of your Directors, that he has received a telegraphic request from Sir Henry Loch, that your Company may be informed as a message from him that he is unaware of any difference of opinion between himself and Mr. Rhodes.

Sir H. Loch adds that he has not the slightest doubt that he and Mr. Rhodes will continue to work, as hitherto, in perfect accord together.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD FAIRFIELD.

* No. .

Annex 6.

British South Africa Company to Colonial Office.

Sir,

19, St. Swithin's Lane, London, October 27, 1893.

I AM desired by my Directors to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters of this date, from the earlier of which they learn that Sir Henry Loch has, on the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, informed Mr. Rhodes that "negotiations with Lo Bengula are to be conducted by the High Commissioner and under his complete control," but has added that "no Agreement will of course be concluded without inviting a full expression of your (Mr. Rhodes') views."

With reference to your letter of yesterday, my Board notes with satisfaction the statements that the instructions sent by Her Majesty's Government to Sir Henry Loch do not refer to the conduct of the military operations, and that they do not contemplate any action inconsistent with the Royal Charter granted to this Company.

I am, however, desired to point out that the instructions telegraphed by Sir Henry Loch to Mr. Rhodes did in fact suggest to those in South Africa some change of policy during the progress of military operations, and were, it is respectfully submitted, most inopportune, as suggesting to Lo Bengula differences between Her Majesty's Government and the Company, which could not fail to greatly weaken the influence of the Company before the Matabele tribe. There is much reason to fear that, unless further explanations and instructions are dispatched to Sir H. Loch to supplement the cable to his Excellency embodying the substance of your letter of yesterday, it will still be assumed that some change of policy has been decided upon.

As the instructions did not carry with them the need for immediate action, my Directors submit that it would have been more in accordance with the usual course if the instructions had been conveyed to the Board in London for transmission to their Managing Director in South Africa, or if, at any rate, they had been conveyed simultaneously to him and to the London Board.

My Directors consider this a proper time to place before Lord Ripon a statement of what they understand the position of the British South Africa Company will be under its Charter with reference to negotiations with Lo Bengula at the termination of the present hostilities.

By clause 3 of the Royal Charter, the Company is empowered to acquire by Treaty "rights, interests, authorities, jurisdictions, and powers of any kind or nature whatever, including powers necessary for the purposes of government and the preservation of public order in or for the protection of territories" within the field of the operations of the Company. It is provided that any such Treaty must be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, and other clauses in the Charter fully secure the supremacy of the Imperial Government in all dealings with native Chiefs and tribes.

It is not suggested that the Company has the exclusive right to make Treaties with natives, but obviously it is inconsistent with the terms of the Charter for Her Majesty's Government to prohibit the Company from negotiating with Lo Bengula. Such a prohibition would over-ride the provisions of the Charter.

Differences having arisen between the Company and Lo Bengula respecting the preservation of peace and order in Mashonaland, and negotiations having failed to establish a *modus vivendi*, the sanction of

Her Majesty's Government was obtained to the commencement of hostilities, and military operations are now being prosecuted. So soon as these operations are brought to a close, no doubt negotiations will be opened with a view to a settlement, and the terms of a Treaty will be discussed between the contending parties.

Having regard to the great experience Mr. Rhodes has acquired in dealing with native questions in South Africa, it is not very probable that serious differences would arise between the Company and the Matabele tribe as to the terms of this Treaty; but, should there be differences, my Directors take note that, under the provisions of clause 7 of the Charter, Her Majesty's Government require them to be submitted to the Secretary of State for his decision.

As regards the general considerations that may arise, and interests that may be affected in the settlement, and which Her Majesty's Government think may bear directly upon the peace and security of South and Central Africa, I am desired to say that it was precisely in view of such points that, in framing the Charter, express and full provision was repeatedly inserted to insure that all acquisitions from native Chiefs or tribes, whether by "Concession, Agreement, Grant, or Treaty," require for their validity the approval of the Secretary of State.

It is, moreover, submitted that Mr. Rhodes, as the Company's representative in South Africa, is the most suitable negotiator. Not only is he intimately acquainted with all the conditions of the question, but as it is the Company upon whom the expense and responsibility of the recent operations have fallen, and as the Company is, under Her Majesty's Government, primarily accountable for the good order and well-being of the territories affected, the representative of the Company appears to be the proper person to elaborate the details of a settlement which the Company will have to enforce.

With reference to the inconvenience which would arise if a provisional Agreement made between the Company and Lo Bengula were disapproved by the Secretary of State, I am directed to suggest that the possibility of such inconvenience would be obviated if Mr. Rhodes, before making the provisional Agreement, were to obtain confirmation by the High Commissioner of the terms proposed to be made for the settlement.

In this way the influence of the Company with the natives, to which Lord Ripon rightly attaches importance, would be more effectually maintained than if the Company were to take no apparent part in the negotiations for the Treaty.

The Charter, while of course it takes no powers away from the Crown, confers distinct rights upon the Company, and my Directors trust that Lord Ripon will coincide with the above views of the position created by the Charter. They feel confident that, when the time comes for negotiating a Treaty of Peace with Lo Bengula, if the procedure suggested by this letter is adopted, no difficulties will arise.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

HERBERT CANNING, *Secretary*.

Annex 7.

British South Africa Company to Colonial Office.

Sir, 19, St. Swithin's Lane, London, November 2, 1893.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you copies of the two following cablegrams received from the Honourable C. J. Rhodes last evening:—

(a.) "Reports by natives have come to Fort Victoria that after several engagements with the Matabele the Matabele utterly defeated. Lobengula has fled north-west. British South Africa Company's two forces from Fort Victoria and Fort Salisbury in occupation of Buluwayo. After occupation, Major Goold Adams joined British South Africa Company at Buluwayo, and combined forces are pursuing Lobengula. The column under Major Goold Adams has not, it is reported, been in action. Congratulate Board of Directors on this splendid news of Company having beaten Matabele single handed, and having occupied Buluwayo."

(b.) "I claim [the] people here have beaten the Matabele. The British South Africa Company never asked the British Government [for] any assistance. I have paid expenses, and I claim I should have settlement of the terms of peace, subject to approval Secretary of State for Colonies and Sir Henry Loch. Please remember we never asked for any assistance; even Major Goold Adams' movement was purely act of Sir Henry Loch, without any request from us. As to governing country, I have men and means to do so."

Also copies of the following cablegrams received from the British South Africa Company's Cape Town Office to-day:—

(c.) "C. J. Rhodes requests me to inform you Sir Henry Loch offered, if C. J. Rhodes wished, to leave Imperial police Buluwayo during rains; but, after consideration, C. J. Rhodes declined kindly offer, as, in his opinion, British South Africa Company's police quite strong enough. Further news again received in confirmation of our telegram of yesterday."

(d.) "In our recent engagement two Europeans killed, Burnett, Walters; six Europeans wounded slightly."

I am, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CANNING, *Secretary.*

18617.

Confidential.

8

Telegram. Sir H. B. Loch to the Marquess of Ripon.

(Received 9.40 p.m., 2nd November, 1893.)

I have received following Minute signed by Sir Gordon Sprigg:—

Begins: 1st November, 1893. Ministers beg to express to his Excellency the Governor their sense of the high importance to this Colony and to the whole of South Africa of the events passing and impending in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, where armed hostilities have taken place, and on a still larger scale appear to be immediately threatening, between the British South Africa Company and the Amatabele; hostilities which have been necessitated by intruding raids of the Amatabele into Mashonaland, by their barbarous interference with and treatment of the peaceful native inhabitants of that part of the territories under the Company's Charter, and by the consequent disturbance and interruption of the legitimate and orderly development and civilization of those territories by the Company. Ministers deem it to be their clear duty when such events are happening or anticipated not to withhold a definite expression of their views and of any advice which they may be able to offer to your Excellency in connection with affairs in which this Colony and its inhabitants, both those still here and those who have already moved forward and northward, are vitally and immediately concerned. Actuated by this sense of their responsible duty, Ministers beg to record their unanimous and firm conviction that, in the true interests of the Empire, of which this Colony forms no unimportant part, as well as in the more particular interest of this Colony itself and of its inhabitants, it is of the highest importance that the British South Africa Company should, both during and after the conclusion of such hostilities as may unfortunately be still necessary, exercise, subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Imperial Government, a free hand in the measures to be adopted, with a view to that satisfactory settlement which your Ministers have every reason to hope will follow from the action of the Company while under the practical control and advice of the Honourable C. J. Rhodes, the Managing Director of the Company in South Africa. Ministers desire to add that there can be no doubt that a very strong and widespread opinion exists, and is at the present time growing in this Colony and South Africa, in favour of the views expressed in this Minute, and they beg respectfully to request that your Excellency may be pleased to convey by cable this expression of their views to Her Majesty's Imperial Government. *Ends.*

To this I replied as follows:—

Begins: 2nd November, 1893. Dear Sir Gordon Sprigg,—In answer to the Minute from Ministers tendering me advice upon the future administration of Matabeleland, I beg to point out that in the settlement of the Matabele question there are many matters to be considered which are of wide Imperial interest, affecting territories beyond the immediate jurisdiction of the British South Africa Company, and the arrangements to be carried out in the interests of the Company itself will be conducted as heretofore by the High Commissioner, in consultation with Mr. Rhodes, the Managing Director of the Company. I, moreover, cannot admit the constitutional principle apparently claimed by Ministers in their Minute to give official advice to the

Governor as his responsible advisers on Matabele beyond the limits of their constitutional jurisdiction. I can, however, assure Ministers that I am ready at all times to give the greatest weight to their opinions, but you will, I am sure, recognize that any appearance of advice as a Government will strengthen the objection entertained by many that the office of High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony should be combined in the same person. I may add I have been in telegraphic conversation with Mr. Rhodes, who may be expected shortly in Cape Town to consult with me, and that I have no doubt a satisfactory settlement will be arrived at. Will you be good enough to show this letter to your colleagues? *Ends.*
